

CLAIMS GANG SHOPLIFTERS GOT OFF EASY— WANTS FAIR PLAY FOR MRS. LEATHERMAN

Last winter Mrs. Lila Leatherman stole silk dresses from Charles Stevens & Co.'s State street store. Working with Mrs. Leatherman was a gang. In May this gang got caught and State street store detectives told the newspapers a gang had been "captured" and all were going to get fierce punishment.

Out of fourteen thieves "captured" last May only one has been jammed through for any real punishment. Now allegations come that all of the professional crooks, all the old-timers in the gang, got off easy, while the one that got jammed is the only woman in the gang who doesn't have a police record and is new to the business.

Judge Charles M. Thompson today sent a messenger to Gov. Dunne with a letter asking pardon for Mrs. Lila Leatherman. She is in the Bridewell with six months to serve of an eight-months' sentence for stealing silk dresses.

The main facts on which Judge Thompson asks pardon for the Leatherman woman are these:

Since Mrs. Leatherman was sent to the Bridewell Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Schlesinger, leaders of the gang, got one continuance after another in the courts. Last week they were sentenced to one week in county jail.

Lucille Harmon, Jessie Mace and other women who were in on stealing silk dresses and fur coats from Stevens are out on parole. Nobody in the gang got any real punishment except Mrs. Leatherman.

Ass't State's Att'y John Prystalski said that in the Leatherman case the woman pleaded guilty.

"The understanding was that if the others were equally guilty they should receive the same punishment," said Prystalski. "House Detective John Evans of Stevens' store and the Young Detective agency gathered the evidence in the case

and the State Street Retail Stores ass'n was represented in court by Att'y Charles Barret."

"There is mystery in this case from start to finish," commented Mrs. Leonora Z. Meder. "I am not retained and I have no interest except as a citizen. Frankly, I don't like to see the ridiculous workings of so-called law and justice in this matter. I happened to be in court on another matter when Mrs. Leatherman was convicted. I talked with her. If she is a professional crook, as are some of the others in this gang, she looks less like a regular crook than some of the others. I cannot understand why this one woman should be singled out for punishment and all the others get off easy. I am glad Judge Thomson has started action for a pardon to this woman."

"The Stevens store people said if Mrs. Leatherman would pay them \$10,000 there would be no prosecution," said M. D. Smith, attorney for Mrs. Leatherman. "I can understand why State street stores should prosecute thieves and bring them to punishment. What I cannot understand is why there has been a playing of favorites. The two professional criminals with old records get one week in jail. A dozen others get paroles. My client gets eight months. I would like to have the justice of this made clear."

—o—o— POSTOFFICE CLERKS WANT RELIEF FROM "SPEEDING UP"

Postoffice Clerks' union yesterday passed a resolution urging state and city labor federations to demand from Postmaster General Burleson relief from "speeding-up" systems and conditions "detrimental to good health and morals" now prevalent under "slave-driving" foremen.

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Thirty school playgrounds dedicated
by city council parks committee